



## **Huss Grad Earns Law Award from College**

**By Erin Elizabeth Walker**  
Gazette Correspondent

PRINCETON, W.Va. — Cathy Wallace did not always know what she wanted to be when she grew up.

She wanted to help people, but did not know exactly how. A suggestion from friends sparked her interest.

"When I was in college, I thought I wanted to be a doctor," she said. "I found I didn't want to do that and realized an interest in psychology. I didn't know what I wanted to do, but all my friends thought I should go into law because I was always on a soapbox. I decided to try it."

Recently, Wallace received the Outstanding Woman Lawyer in Public Interest Law Award. The award was voted on and presented by the women's caucus of West Virginia University College of Law.

Wallace, 38, called Gastonia home from the age of 8 until she graduated from Hunter Huss High School in 1983. Her parents, Carter Bond, 66, and Carol Bond, 59, are still residents of Gastonia.

From Hunter Huss, she moved on to pursue a degree at Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer.

After graduation from Pfeiffer in 1987 with a bachelor's degree in both biology and psychology, she worked as legal secretary for attorney Louis A. Bledsoe Jr. for a year and a half.

"Working for Louis Bledsoe was a pivotal moment," she said. "That was when I decided to go into the practice of law."

She received her law degree at the University of Arkansas in 1992 and began her legal career in Public Defender Corp. in Princeton. She also taught criminal justice classes at Bluefield College in West Virginia.

Wallace lives in Athens, W. Va., with her husband Rob, 37, and her daughters Rachel, 11, and Claire, 5.

Working in Princeton at Legal Aid of West Virginia, she is also a Junior Girl Scout leader in Athens, on the board of Advisors for Children's Home Society and on several committees for Concord United Methodist Church.

Legal Aid of West Virginia provides civil legal services and advocacy to residents of West Virginia. The organization is the result of a merger between Appalachian Legal Services and the West Virginia Legal Services Plan.

Wallace worked with Joyce McConnell, associate dean for academic affairs at West Virginia University College of Law, to set up a Kellogg Grant internship for law students of WVU in 1990.

"The students can go down into the counties and help domestic violence victims," Wallace said. They hold workshops for women of SAFE (Stop Abusive Family Environment).

Wallace helped to implement and supervise. McConnell spearheaded writing the grant. They came up with the interns themselves and set up guidelines for the internship.

Adrian Worthy, director of Legal Aid of West Virginia, has known Wallace for years.

"She is very committed to her clients who are both low income and have troubling domestic problems," Worthy said. "Cathy is very passionate about their concerns. She's good at looking at the big picture. She's responsible for four offices and she looks at how to deliver as many services to as many people as possible."

Wallace's commitment has been acknowledged. She was promoted in February to regional counsel. She manages legal services for approximately 12 counties south of Charleston, W. Va.

Wallace has enjoyed all of her work experience.

"This job gives me the opportunity to help people," she said. "I go home feeling satisfied with my job."

Her mother sees Wallace's job as simply a manifestation of who she has always been.

"She's not just good at what she does, but she's also helping people," Carol Bond said. "She's always been concerned with helping people. That's just her nature."